



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement



Law Enforcement Support Center Training Manual

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INTRODUCTION

The Law Enforcement Support Center (LESC or Center) was developed in response to a Congressional anti-crime initiative to respond to inquiries from federal, state, and local criminal justice agencies concerning aliens under investigation or arrest for commission of an “aggravated felony” or other criminal offenses. The Congressional mandate was originally specified in the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 and has been reiterated and modified in subsequent pieces of legislation. The Immigration and Nationality Act was amended as follows:

- “(A) The Attorney General shall devise and implement a system -*
- (i) To make available, daily (on a 24 hour basis), to give federal, state and local authorities the investigative resources of the Service to determine whether individuals arrested by such authorities for aggravated felonies are aliens; and*
 - (ii) To designate and train officers and employees of the Service within each district to serve as a liaison to federal, state and local law enforcement and correctional agencies and courts with respect to the arrest, conviction, and release of any alien charged with an aggravated felony.”¹*

On March 1, 2003, the Immigration and Naturalization Service was restructured into the Bureaus of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The LESO is an ICE Headquarters Investigations component.

Special Agents from ICE respond to a variety of criminal and administrative enforcement matters within the interior of the United States. The U.S. Border Patrol, now one of the uniformed enforcement branches of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), enforces the immigration laws along the borders of the United States.

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT CENTER

The LESO, located in Williston, Vermont, serves as a national enforcement operations center responding to inquiries from federal, state, and local criminal justice agencies concerning aliens under investigation or arrested for commission of an “aggravated felony” or other criminal offense. The Center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week assisting law enforcement agencies with information gathered from each database containing immigration information, the National Crime Information Center

¹ Aggravated felonies are defined as crimes involving murder, rape, child pornography, narcotics trafficking, firearms trafficking, certain felonies such as theft and burglary and other qualified misdemeanors.

(NCIC) and the Interstate Identification Index (III). Direct access to the LESC is available through the National Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (NLETS) message key "IAQ".

Due to the sensitive nature of the information to be provided by the LESC, only agencies authorized to request criminal record information over NLETS will be authorized to access the LESC.

TECHNICAL OPERATIONS BRANCH

The LESC serves as the central point of contact for federal, state and local criminal justice agencies querying the identity and immigration status of aliens. To perform this function, the LESC:

- Receives queries via NLETS from Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) relating to foreign nationals who have committed or are under investigation for criminal offenses
- Searches immigration indices to locate corresponding records relating to the subject in the LEA's inquiry
- Responds via NLETS to the LEAs, providing information from immigration indices, or advising that no matching records were found
- Notifies appropriate ICE field offices that LEAs have arrested a suspected foreign national
- Maintains a database of all LEA inquiries and the LESC responses

In addition to providing real time assistance to law enforcement agencies that are investigating, or have arrested, foreign nationals involved in criminal activity, the LESC also performs the following investigative functions:

- National Crime Information Center (NCIC) – The LESC administers and controls ICE participation in this nationwide law enforcement consortium and criminal database.
- Special Response Unit - The LESC is the central point of contact for the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) program. Every foreign-born firearm applicant is screened by the Center for immigration status before being authorized to purchase or possess a weapon. The SRU also handles queries and field responses relating to national security employment issues (i.e. employment involving the handling of Bio-Toxins). Criminal foreign nationals discovered through

these checks receive additional screening by LESC Special Agents and are transmitted to ICE field offices as investigative leads.

INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH

The LESC Investigative Services Branch (ISB) has been designed to provide the same type of timely and accurate immigration data to internal ICE investigations and field operations. The ISB is divided into special units dedicated to specific enforcement missions:

- Special Case Unit – The LESC provides support to a host of on going multi-agency investigative initiatives. Working in concert with ICE field units, task forces and other local, state and federal investigators the Center gathers, identifies, analyzes and responds to thousands of off-line query requests.
- Communications Center - The Comm Center serves ICE Special Agents and Deportation Officers nationwide with after-hours telephonic enforcement support via our digitally recorded duty lines confirmed by Personal Identification Numbers.

IMMIGRATION ALIEN QUERY (IAQ) FORMAT FOR LESC INQUIRIES

All electronic Immigration Alien Queries (IAQ) sent via NLETS must contain the required fields in order to process the inquiry. Any optional information supplied in the request will increase the probability of finding a positive record and enable a more informative response to be returned. Response times will vary depending upon the return of individual state criminal histories and the complexity of the query.

Listed below are explanations of the REQUIRED and OPTIONAL fields. All formatted inquiries MUST be sent to the LESC two character address "AX." NLETS will perform the normal edits for required data, length, and content.

Example:

*IAQ.AZNLETS00.AX.TXT
PUR/C.ATN/OFC R P MCMURPHY.PHN/602 652 2000.NAM/DOE,
JOHN.DOB/061045.SEX/M.POB/MM.CUS/Y.OFF/0399*

NOTE: According to the NLETS protocol, the presence of a period in any field marks the end of that field. For example, the attention field (ATN/) and remarks field (REM/) should not contain a period when using an abbreviated title or ending your sentence. The use of a period anywhere within the request signifies the end of the field. Also, the final field in the inquiry should not be followed by a period.

REQUIRED FIELD SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE IAQ

ENTRY	# CHAR.	EXPLANATION
IAQ	3	Message type followed by a period
Sender ORI	9	Sender ORI followed by a period
Destination ORI	2	Destination ORI; must be "AX" followed by a period and an optional control field
TXT	3	Normal TXT
PUR/	4	Prefix for purpose code field
Purpose Code	1	Purpose code followed by a period. Must be "C or F"
ATN/	4	Prefix for attention field
Attention Field	Max. 30	Name of individual making inquiry followed by a period.
PHN/	4	Prefix for phone number of inquirer
Telephone #	20	Area code and telephone # of requester followed by a period
NAM/	4	Prefix for name field
Name	30	Name of subject (last, first, middle) followed by a period
DOB/	4	Prefix for date of birth
Date of Birth	8	Date of birth in yyyyymmdd format followed by a period
SEX/	4	Prefix for sex field
Sex	1	Sex field followed by a period
POB/	4	Prefix for place of birth
Place of Birth	2	Place of birth using standard NCIC code followed by a period
CUS/	4	Prefix for custody field

Custody	1	Indicates if subject is in custody; must be Y or N followed by a period
OFF/	4	Prefix for offense code
Offense code	4	NCIC offense code, most serious charge followed by a period

FOLLOWED BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL FIELDS:

ENTRY	# CHAR.	EXPLANATION
ARN/	4	Prefix for Alien registration number
Alien Reg. #	8 or 9	Alien registration number followed by a period unless it is the last field. IMPORTANT! This key immigration field identifier should be used if known.
FBI/	4	Prefix for FBI #
FBI #	9	FBI number followed by a period
SID/	4	Prefix for State ID #
State ID #	10	State ID number followed by a period
OLN/	4	Prefix for operator's license number
Operator's license #	20	Operator's license number followed by a period
HGT/	4	Prefix for height
Height	3	Height followed by a period
WGT/	4	Prefix for weight
Weight	3	Weight followed by a period
EYE/	4	Prefix for eye color
Eye color	3	Eye color followed by a period
MMN/	4	Prefix for Mother's maiden name
Mother's maiden name	1-15	Mother's maiden name followed by a period
MFN/	4	Prefix for Mother's first name
Mother's first name	1-10	Mother's first name followed by a period
FLN/	4	Prefix for Father's last name
Father's last name	1-15	Father's last name followed by a period

FFN/	4	Prefix for Father's first name
Father's first name	1-10	Father's first name followed by a period
MNU/	4	Prefix for miscellaneous number
Misc. #	1-15	Miscellaneous number followed by a period
SOC/	4	Prefix for social security #
Soc. Sec. #	9	Social security number followed by a period
PPN/	4	Prefix for passport number
Passport #	1-15	Passport number followed by a period
BKN/	4	Prefix for booking number
Booking #	1-15	Booking numbers are required for inquiries from correctional or jail facilities
REM/	4	Prefix for remarks
Remarks	1-300	Remarks section to include relevant information (ie: release dates, unreported convictions, requests for non-action, AKAs alternate DOBs, etc.)

LESC MESSAGE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Due to the manual intervention required in interpreting and analyzing immigration indices, search results and response times will vary depending upon the complexity of the information found in the databases. However, the LESC will provide an automated acknowledgment notifying the requesting agency that the inquiry has been received and is being processed.

The Positive Message Acknowledgment (PMA) will read as follows:

YOUR INQUIRY HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THE ICE LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT CENTER. A RESPONSE WILL BE FORWARDED TO YOU UPON COMPLETION OF THE DATABASE SEARCHES. END.

IMMIGRATION ALIEN RESPONSE (IAR)

The first part of each Immigration Alien Response (IAR) will include the actual inquiry sent to the LESC. This will enable the requesting agency to match the inquiry with the associated response. A summarization of information found during the database search will be returned in a formatted text response. The final segment of the response will be completed using the message, "END". This will signify that no other information on this inquiry is forthcoming. Requests for clarification may be directed to the LESC at VTINS07S0 utilizing the standard NLETS Administrative Message ("AM") format.

LESC SEARCH PROTOCOL

LESC Law Enforcement Technicians (LET) research every Immigration Alien Query (IAQ) by using a standard computer search protocol. This protocol involves accessing the National Crime Information Center and the Interstate Identification Index. Data returned from those indices are then systematically fed into the DHS immigration databases. The LET analyzes all relevant data and creates an Immigration Alien Response (IAR). These responses are returned via NLETS to the requesting agency with a copy automatically sent to the nearest ICE office having jurisdiction.

When deemed appropriate certain queries may be referred to a Special Agent for review and further examination.

In addition to the criminal history searches, additional databases of immigration information can also be queried. A brief description of each may be found below:

CENTRAL INDEX SYSTEM (CIS)

The Central Index contains data on lawful permanent residents, naturalized citizens, violators of immigration laws, aliens with Employment Authorization Document (EAD) information, and others of which the former INS has opened files or in whom there is a special interest.

CIS provides several major capabilities, including searching the alien database using multiple criteria and displaying summary level data on the alien. The major search keys are Alien Registration Number (A-Number), name and date of birth.

COMPUTER LINKED APPLICATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CLAIMS)

CLAIMS is an application processing system, which provides information, concerning the receipt, adjudication, and notification processes for applicants and petitioners of immigration benefits, such as Permanent Residency, Employment Authorization Documents, etc. The current CLAIMS implementation combines several systems that support these processing requirements.

DEPORTABLE ALIEN CONTROL SYSTEM (DACS)

DACS provides information on the status and disposition of deportation cases. The DACS system captures deportable alien data, tracks aliens who are arrested, detained or formally removed from the country, and produces deportation forms and reports.

STUDENT AND SCHOOLS SYSTEM (STSC) and STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS)

STSC is the original system used to identify, locate, and determine the status or benefits eligibility of nonimmigrant students and their dependents.

SEVIS, a new Internet based computer system, enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information and event notifications to DHS and the Department of State throughout a foreign student's or exchange visitor's stay in the United States.

RE-DESIGNED NATURALIZATION APPLICATION CASEWORK SYSTEM (RNACS)

RNACS is a casework management system that tracks the naturalization process of aliens seeking United States Citizenship. The data is captured from forms and applications submitted by aliens. The data includes general biographical background information, addresses, processing dates, interview dates and the disposition or current status of the application for U.S. Citizenship.

REFUGEE, ASYLUM, AND PAROLE SYSTEM (RAPS)

RAPS is a comprehensive case management system that tracks the Refugee, Asylum, and Parole processes of aliens in the United States. The information contained in RAPS is obtained from forms, applications, and interviews with the alien. The case status is tracked throughout the cycle, showing the status of the alien at time of entry, and the completion of the process. The data includes general biographical background information, addresses, processing dates, interview dates, and information regarding the outcome of hearings.

TREASURY ENFORCEMENT COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (TECS)

This system contains the Interagency Border Inspection System (IBIS) which is used to query applicants for admission to the United States. IBIS also contains information collected from a wide variety of federal law enforcement agencies such as the former INS National Automated Immigration Lookout System (NAILS) and the Department of State lookout records.

The standard search protocol may be modified to suit a particular investigative project. The Special Case Unit also has several commercial databases available to further expand the investigative packet of subject information.

OPERATION PREDATOR

The LESC is a critical link in Operation Predator, the ICE investigative program aimed at arresting and prosecuting child sex predators, including those who can be deported from the country. Effective prosecution requires coordination between local and federal law enforcement that the LESC facilitates. The DHS nation-wide toll free telephone number (1-866-DHS-2ICE) for the public to report information about child sex offenders and others who put children at risk is answered at the LESC.